

Michigan Department of Community Health – Bureau of Laboratories
January 14, 2005

Dear Colleague,
Re: Changes in Reportable Disease Rules

There are some important changes in the state's communicable disease rules that will directly affect clinical laboratories. The following agents and diseases of recent concern were added to the list of reportable diseases by virtue of an Emergency Rule signed by Governor Granholm in December, and take effect immediately:

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)

Avian Influenza

Orthopox virus (including **smallpox** and **monkeypox**)

Staphylococcus aureus, intermediate or resistant to **vancomycin (VISA, VRSA)**, from any site

Arbovirus (including West Nile virus, Eastern Equine Encephalitis, St. Louis Encephalitis, and California Group [LaCrosse] viruses)

Spongiform encephalopathies (including **Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease**)

Streptococcus pneumoniae, **Invasive** (sterile site) **or drug-resistant** (any site)

Please note, this reporting is required of all laboratories that receive or process specimens **even if the testing is not done on-site** (i.e., the specimen is sent to a reference laboratory for testing).

In separate legislation, laboratories will be required to report all CD4 counts/percents, HIV viral load results (including undetectable levels), and confirmed positive HIV serology (e.g., positive Western Blot tests) beginning April 1, 2005. (The option for anonymous testing and reporting was not removed by this legislation).

In most cases, reporting should be done through the **local** health department in the jurisdiction where the patient resides. MDCH will work closely with all reporting laboratories to assist and assure that confidentiality will be maintained.

Further information on these changes will be forthcoming, and a new disease reporting list is being prepared for distribution.

Clinical microbiologists have certainly understood the significance of these “new” agents prior to this legislation, and many have reported them regularly to the health department. We are indebted to our clinical laboratory partners, without whom we would not have the information needed to keep Michigan healthy.

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